

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this Response, Claims 1-8 are pending in the application. It is gratefully acknowledged that Claims 4-8 remain allowed by the Examiner. The Examiner has objected to Claim 2 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner maintains his rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ito (U.S. Patent 6,408,039), as well as his rejection of Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ito.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of dependent Claim 2. Independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Without conceding the patentability per se of dependent Claim 3, this is likewise believed to be allowable by virtue of its dependence on its respective independent claim. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of dependent Claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, all of the claims pending in the Application, namely, Claims 1 and 3-8, are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicant's attorney at the number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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